

Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 AID-20 IGA-02 EB-11 NEA-10 MC-02

COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-07 CIEP-02 STR-08 OMB-01 OPIC-12

CU-04 AGR-20 PC-15 DRC-01 /241 W

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R 041325Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3856

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 3757

E.O. 11652 - GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ES, HO

SUBJECT: MOLINA PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 3719

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. IN PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 2, PRESIDENT MOLINA TOUCHED ON A NUMBER OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. SEPARATE CABLE FOLLOWS ON ECONOMIC ITEMS.

2. AIR FORCE MODERNIZATION AND HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR NEGOTIATIONS--MOLINA CONFIRMED THAT EL SALVADOR HAS PURCHASED FIGHTERS, TRAINERS AND TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FROM ISRAEL AS PART OF A LONG STAND MODERNIZATION PLAN. HOWEVER, HE DECLINED TO GIVE THE COST OF THE PURCHASE
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"FOR REASONS FOR SECURITY". HE SAID THAT EL SALVADOR

HAD FIRST ATTEMPTED TO PURCHASE AIRCRAFT FROM THE US BUT HAD FOUND THE COST HIGH, REPAYMENT TIME SHORT AND DELIVERY TIME TOO LONG (HE CLAIMED THREE YEARS). THE PRESIDENT INSISTED THAT THE AIRCRAFT ACQUISITION WAS IN NO WAY RELATED TO THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH HONDURAS UNDERWAY IN MEXICO, AND POINTED OUT THAT GOES FIRST TOOK STEPS TO PURCHASE THEM LAST JULY. QUERIED ABOUT A PRESS REPORT (REFTEL) ALLEGING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SECRET MILITARY BASE IN HONDURAS, MOLINA DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH A BASE, TERMED THE REPORT SPECULATION, AND CONCLUDED THAT SUCH SPECULATION DID NOT DISTURB HIM SINCE "THE CORDIALITY BETWEEN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY EVIDENT IN THE CONVERSATIONS TAKING PLACE WITH HONDURAS."

3. THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND SALVADORAN EXILES -- MOLINA EXPRESSED HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE "CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY" OF THE STUDENTS AT THE RECENTLY RE-OPENED NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, AND OPINED THAT THE STUDENT BODY WAS MORE INTERESTED IN MAKING UP LOST EDUCATIONAL TIME THAN IN PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY. ASKED ABOUT THE FORMER UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY AT THE TIME OF UNIVERSITY INTERVENTION, MOST OF WHOM CURRENTLY RESIDE IN COSTA RICA, MOLINA STATED THAT "ALL SALVADORANS ANYWHERE WITHIN THE COMMON HOMELAND-CENTRAL AMERICA CAN ENTER EL SALVADOR AND TRAVEL FREELY WITHIN IT."

4. AGRARIAN REFORM-MOLINA REITERATED HIS GOVT'S COMMITMENT TO AGRARIAN REFORM-"IT WILL BE DONE" HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT "WE DO NOT ENJOY THE LUXURY OF MAKING MISTAKES AND THUS WE NEED ANALYSIS IN DEPTH OF THE NATIONAL REALITIES TO AVOID ERRORS". THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION WILL BE "SLOW BUT SURE", HE ADDED. MOLINA CLAIMED THAT THE TECHNICAL STUDIES CONDUCTED BY THE GOVT WERE CURRENTLY UNDER EVALUATION IN ORDER TO FIND AN INTEGRAL SOLUTION TO THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM. (DIARIO DE HOY, CITING "INFORMED SOURCES" CONTENTS IN THIS MORNING'S EDITION THAT THE PRESIDENT TOLD GOVT LEADERS SEPTEMBER 28 THAT AGRARIAN REFORM LEGISLATION

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WILL NOT BE INTRODUCED UNTIL AFTER THE MARCH 1974 LEGISLATIVE/MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS TO AVOID CHARGES OF POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY).

5. CHILE AND ARGENTINA-QUERIED ABOUT THE SPEED WITH WHICH THE GOES ANNOUNCED THE CONTINUATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE NEW GOVT IN CHILE, MOLINA STRESSED THAT SALVADOR HAD ALWAYS ENJOYED EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH CHILE AND THAT

THE GOES HAD SIMPLY "RATIFIED" THIS FRIENDSHIP. MOLINA
ADDED THAT "WE ARE NOT GOING TO JUDGE THE POSITIONS AND POLICIES
OF EACH GOVT." ON THE ELECTION OF PERON IN ARGENTINA,
THE PRESIDENT OBSERVED THAT PERON'S OVERWHELMING VICTORY
EVIDENTLY REPRESENTED THE WILL OF THE ARGENTINE PEOPLE.

6. AMBASSADOR TO THE US-THE PRESIDENT, IN RESPONSE
TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE NOMINATION OF A SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR
TO THE US, STATED THAT HE WOULD MAKE THIS ANNOUNCEMENT
AT THIS NEXT PRESS CONFERENCE (MOLINA HOLDS A REGULAR
PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT ONCE A MONTH BUT ALSO HOLDS
IMPROMPTU SESSIONS FROM TIME TO TIME.)

7. COMMENT: THE PRESS CONFERENCE CONTAINED NO MAJOR
SURPRISES EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR MOLINA'S COMMENT THAT THE
OLD UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP, DEPORTED BY HIS GOVT,
COULD NOW RETURN (WHETHER IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR THEIR
HEALTH TO TRY TO DO SO IS ANOTHER QUESTION). ON
THE ACFT PURCHASE QUESTION, HE WENT TO CONSIDERABLE
LENGTHS TO ALLAY HONDURAN FEARS THAT TO PUT THE BEST
FACE ON THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
MOSKOWITZ

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